

**AMHERST COUNCIL ON AGING MINUTES**  
**June 12, 2008**

**Members Present:** Daniel Clapp, Elsie Fetterman, Joan Golowich, Joel Gordon, Doris Holden, Rosemary Kofler, Barbara Sutherland, David Yaukey

**Absent:** none

**Select Board Liaison, Gerry Weiss:** absent

**Staff Present:** Nancy Pagano (Director/Program Director), Maura Plante (Assistant Director/Services), Karen Erman (Administrative Assistant), Giovanna Mix (Administrative Assistant for Programs)

**Guests:** Kathy Koplow, Nicole Rohan (Director of PVTA Transit Services), Susan Whitbourne (Friends President), Marge Babb, Lillian Scott

**Welcome:**

Barbara Sutherland, Chair, called the Council on Aging meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

The minutes of the May 1, 2008 meeting were approved and accepted.

**Friends of Amherst Senior Center Treasurer's Report:**

**Doris** provided a handout showing a balance of \$4,648.10 in the checking account and \$550.00 in the Stay Put account.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PVTA Fare Increase:**

**Nicole Rohan** reported that comments from the numerous Public Hearing sessions were presented to the PVTA Advisory Board. After much deliberation the board opted to increase fares instead of cutting service. That means a \$.25 Fixed Route increase and a \$.50 Para transit increase, to go into effect July 1, 2008. The discount for buying a packet of tickets will also be reduced. The state may re-instate the "full faith and credit" for RTAs which would mean the rates for borrowing money may go down and provide a little savings. That may help cover skyrocketing fuel prices. The board will revisit budget revenues coming in at three months and six months to see if there is enough revenue coming in to reduce fares again. If gas continues to rise, the State will look at doing a supplemental budget increase to cover the cost. From January to April 2008, there was a 5.5% increase in rider ship on the fixed route. Para transit service has also increased. There is more demand for bike racks. The 'trip planner' website is being utilized.

**STAFF REPORTS**

**New Direction for Caregivers Grant:**

**Maura** talked about lack of participation in the Caregivers Support Group despite attempts to change the format and the time. It is not a good use of the grant money from HVES. Therefore, Maura sent in a proposal to John Lutz at HVES to hire a bilingual, bicultural Hispanic Latino outreach worker. There are about 15 Hispanic Latino residents between Ann Whalen and the Clark House and none of the staff speak Spanish. This person could help those individuals, go out into the community to peoples' homes, and gather folks at the Senior Center to make it a more welcoming place.

**New Directions for Senior Center Emergency Pantry:**

**Maura** became aware of the need for some low income elders to have access to donated household supplies such a shampoo, laundry detergent, toilet paper, etc., in addition to the canned and dried food supplies which we now keep on hand. A second storage cabinet was purchased to hold the household supplies. A notice of this service will be put in the Senior Spirit.

**Maura** spoke about the lack of refrigerator/freezer space in our current refrigerator for the foods that need refrigeration or freezing when they come with the monthly Brown Bag deliveries. The problem grows as the need and number of Brown Bags keeps increasing. Maura and Nancy price-shopped for a new refrigerator. A 25 cubic foot refrigerator with bottom freezer at Manny's was

\$1603.95. If the Friends Group were to agree to spend money on a new refrigerator, Nancy asked the COA if they would support the idea.

**A motion was made, seconded and approved to ask the Friends Group to consider the purchase of a new refrigerator with freezer to store Brown Bag perishables.**

Nancy and Maura will continue to shop further for a better price.

## **CONTINUING BUSINESS**

### **Fundraising and Fund Use discussion with Friends President, Susan Whitbourne:**

The Friends have been meeting for about one year and were incorporated in September 2007. Susan reported one concrete result: a fundraising structure that has produced donations. The Friends met with the Chicopee COA and got numerous other fund raising ideas from that group (such as selling books, walk-a-thons, bake sales, spaghetti dinners, fashion show).

**Susan** pointed out that the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary presents a unique opportunity for people to donate in honor of the occasion, which would establish a new group of people coming forward. Hopefully this could lead to the development of a committee structure for an on-going effort to raise money. Susan suggested that the program for the 40<sup>th</sup> dinner celebration could provide a means of fund raising. People who made a donation would have their names listed in the program. Businesses that donated could have an ad in the program.

**Nancy** said those were good ideas but expressed concern that we don't have the people power to gather ad sales, edit, proof read and organize such an undertaking. Businesses are VERY particular about the presentation of their ads.

**Susan** suggested forming a joint COA/Friends committee, which could include any other interested folks, to explore the 40<sup>th</sup> fund raising effort.

**Nancy** reminded us of the deadline if we were to have an "Insert" section in the Gazette in October featuring the Amherst Senior Center. The cost is \$1500 and the Gazette gets \$4000 through ads to produce the insert. It would alert many people in the community about what the Amherst SC has to offer.

Susan said the Friends have mixed feelings about the insert. Susan would like to see the money from the business ads go directly to the Friends. She asked, "What would be a suitable memento of this occasion?" She suggested we could make our own booklet of photos and remembrances and solicit ads ourselves. The Amherst Bulletin could cover the 40<sup>th</sup> celebration with an article for exposure to the public.

**Rosemary** pointed out that an article on the celebration itself doesn't really expose the public to all the programs and services available at the Senior Center. We want people to know about all the services that we have to offer.

**Karen** reminded us how time intensive (and often futile) it is to reach out to businesses for ads.

**Elsie** stressed that we shouldn't only rely on members of the COA and Friends to solicit ads. There are many other people who use the Senior Center who could volunteer their help. We need to ask them.

**David** expressed that because of the degree of ambivalence about the Gazette insert we should put it on hold.

**Joan** suggested a special 40<sup>th</sup> edition of the Senior Spirit, which would reach far more people than just those who attend the celebration dinner.

**Nancy** said we need to consider what our goal is: Is it to give a momento to the seniors in town or: Is it to help others in the community who don't get the *Senior Spirit* understand how vital the Senior Center is to the well-being of elders. Perhaps we need a working group to work this out.

**Rosemary and Dan agreed to work with Nancy, Susan, and others from the Friends, on a committee to work on producing a booklet and program.**

## **SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE**

### **Election of COA Officers for FY09 – Nominating Committee:**

<b>Dan</b> presented the slate.	Chair:	Barbara Sutherland
	Vice Chair:	Dan Clapp
	Secretary:	Rosemary Kofler
	Treasurer:	Doris Holden

**A motion was made to accept the slate of officers. It was seconded and approved unanimously.**

The COA had a vacancy. The committee interviewed **Kathy Koplow**, Manager of the Clark House. She was enthusiastically recommended to fill that vacancy. Kathy is involved in serving the seniors in town. We await the Town Manager's approval.

**Thank you to Elsie Fetterman for her COA two-term service:**

**Elsie** thanked the COA for their contribution to Amherst and the seniors. She encouraged us to promote the Senior Center and let others know what happens here. Elsie participates regularly in programs and services at the Senior Center. Elsie is on the National Adult Family Care Organization. In MA over 30 agencies administer the program. A new program is available for \$1800/month, which would allow elders to remain in their home and receive the services of a Caregiver. A Social worker and a nurse supervise it. The Department of Elder Affairs, Medicare and Medicaid fund it. Family members, excepting the spouse, can also be paid to be Caregiver.

**Fortieth Anniversary Sub-Committee:**

**Rosemary** reported. The last meeting was on May 29. Dinner plans are arranged for October 19. It is hoped that there will be several speakers. These may include Larry Shaffer, Ellen Story, Stan Rosenberg, Barry DelCastilho, Jean Haggerty, Jean Potash, Sara Wolff, John Clobridge, and Allen Torrey. Entertainment will include a continuous slide show of historic photos during the reception. Nancy will talk about the slides after the dinner. Invitations are being worked on. Table favors, centerpieces, and decorations were discussed. The reception will have a non-alcoholic punch and a champagne punch. There will be one bottle of red and white wine at each table.

**Elsie** suggested asking package stores to donate the wine.

**Fourth of July Parade:**

**Nancy** is looking for participants to take part in the parade. They can either march and hold a banner or ride in the Senior Center van. We will meet at 1:30 in the Big Y lot, hop in the van and go to the starting point near Amherst College at 2:00. The parade starts at 3:00. We will go from the Route 9 and 116 intersections to Triangle Street. Rosemary and Dan volunteered to carry the banner. Dan advised that marchers carry placards, which name the services that the Senior Center offers.

**Ad Hoc 2010 Survey Committee:**

**David, Chair**, reported. David, Nancy, Joel and Shirley Packard met on May 27. They focused on the 'needs survey'. They would like to build on the one done in Chicopee for economic reasons and because it would provide comparability between the two communities. They decided to target the senior population and not do a separate survey for Baby Boomers (as Chicopee did). Sondra Lapollo from the Chicopee COA and Jan Dizard from the Sociology Department at Amherst College were invited to join the committee. They accepted.

Kent Faerber, President of the Community Foundation of Western MA, agreed to advise on the survey. Kent suggested possible funding sources for the survey, among which could be the Community Foundation. The Chicopee survey cost was \$28,000. The next meeting will be June 26.

**Highland Valley Elder Services:**

**Barbara** attended the meeting on June 2. John Lutz, Associate Director of Community Development, made a presentation on the Caring Community request for proposals. The next meeting will be held on September 8.

The COA meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM.

The minutes of the May 1, 2008 COA meeting were delivered to the Selectboard office to be filed.

**The next meeting of the COA will be held on July 10, 2008 at 9:00 AM.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Rosemary Kofler, Secretary